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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0952
INFO RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 000234

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ECON SOCI UNDP UNGA GT

SUBJECT: Guatemala Demarche on Distracted Driving

REF: A) 10 STATE 6703

¶1. (U) Poloff delivered reftel points to PROVIAL, the Government of Guatemala's (GoG) principle highway patrol authority. The PROVIAL representative stated that Guatemala's current traffic laws do not address the issue of cell phone use or texting while driving. The GoG has compiled some general statistics on "distracted driving" which PROVIAL will provide, along with informal statistics collected by the Fire Department, which acts as a first responder to auto accidents. PROVIAL's representative stated that the GoG provides written and interactive educational activities for students on road safety. He said that though the curriculum does not explicitly address texting while driving, it is mentioned under the "distracted driving" category. The representative also indicated that a group of interested parties - including the private sector, civil society, and the National Civil Police - are reviewing Guatemala's "antiquated" laws on driving, and hope that Congress will revise the laws to reflect current realities.

MCFARLAND